OPERA news

VOL. IX NO. 1 OCTOBER 2, 1944 PRICE 15 CENTS

LICIA ALBANESE AS MIMI IN LA BOHEME
Metropolitan Opera Soprano featured in San Francisco Season

METROPOLITAN OPERA GUILD CALENDAR

Tues., October 10, 3:30 p.m. Hotel Pierre. Opening Meeting. Edward Johnson, speaker. Musical program.

Mon., October 16. Opening of the Chicago Opera Season.

Mon., October 30. Opening of Los Angeles season of the San Francisco Opera Company.

Mon., November 27. Opening Night at the Metropolitan.

Sat., December 2, 2 p.m. Blue Network. Opening broadcast from the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House.

Mon., December 11, 1 p.m. Waldorf-Astoria. Membership luncheon.

Fri., December 15, 1 p.m. Metropolitan Opera House. *Aida.* Junior Performance sponsored by The Metropolitan Opera Guild.

Fri., January 26, 1 p.m. *Lohengrin.* Junior Performance sponsored by The Metropolitan Opera Guild.

Fri., February 16. *Aida.* Junior Performance sponsored by The Metropolitan Opera Guild.

Fri., March 23. *Lohengrin.* Junior Performance sponsored by The Metropolitan Opera Guild.

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OPERA news

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VOL. IX OCTOBER 2, 1944 NO. 1

CONTENTS

Prelude to Peace, by *Edward Johnson*.... 2
Names, Dates and Places..... 3
Highlights of the Jubilee Season Statement 4
Metropolitan Progress, a *New York Times* Editorial 5
Opera in the Theatres of War..... 6
San Francisco Opera Thrives in Wartime, by *Alexander Fried*..... 10
Big Voices for Light Opera..... 13
The Chicago Opera Company to open its 33rd Season 14
Donizetti's Regiment occupies Piedmont, by *Nancy Ann Harris*..... 16
Good Neighbors in Opera, by *Friede Rothe*..... 18
Speaking of Cincinnati Summer Opera, by *Charlotte L. Shockley*..... 22
Metropolitan Opera Stars shed Glamor on Los Angeles, by *Cedric Hart*..... 24
Wanted—a Soprano in the Aleutians..... 27
The San Francisco Opera Guild Family 28
Vital Statistics 29
American Opera for the Metropolitan.... 30
Violetta to Die Daily..... 32
Chicago Opera Repertory.....3rd Cover
San Francisco Opera Repertory....3rd Cover

This Week

OPERA NEWS resumes publication for the season of 1944-1945, choosing its initial date, as usual, to coincide with the opening of the San Francisco Opera season.

For our cover picture we have chosen the popular Metropolitan soprano, Licia Albanese, who is scheduled to sing the leading roles in nine out of the twenty performances announced for San Francisco.

We welcome to our editorial page the Metropolitan's General Manager, Edward Johnson, who, like the Guild, is entering his tenth season of service to the Metropolitan.

Especial interest attaches to the article describing the Piedmont Festival in Winston-Salem because of the fact that its opera director, Clifford Bair, is now chairman of the National Committee for Opera in America.

and Next

Plans for the Metropolitan Opera season will be divulged at the annual autumn press conference which Mr. Johnson holds at the Opera House. These will be reported in full in the next OPERA NEWS, dated November 6.

Admirers of Dr. Herbert Graf will be interested to read the first of a series of articles which the Metropolitan stage director has promised on his current work with NBC in the field of television opera.

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Prelude to Peace

BY EDWARD JOHNSON

General Manager of The Metropolitan Opera Association

Today the hearts of the nation are uplifted in thanksgiving, for under our very eyes we see the road to victory becoming a luminous reality. Already our minds are visualizing a new world at peace, a peace which will bring to humanity a new order of progress, of opportunity, not only in industry and economics, but also in the field of culture and art.

One step towards this new world order has already been achieved by the Metropolitan. A large part of the heavy burden of real estate taxes has been lifted and the theatre now belongs to the opera-loving public. This in turn puts the responsibility on the Metropolitan toward the taxpayers of the City of New York.

Although the war has made it impossible to bring foreign stars to this country, we have been greatly encouraged with the excellent results attained by the alumni of the Auditions of the Air and other native singers. Without the wealth of talent disclosed by these young Americans, it would have been impossible to assemble a company of the excellent standards of the present-day organization. More young native artists have been discovered, developed and presented by the Metropolitan in the past ten years, than in the preceding five decades of its artistic existence. Recently, many of these young singers have been enticed by the very attractive rewards of Operetta, but on the other hand. The Metropolitan has drafted many outstanding talents from light opera and radio. There are still rewards which are not measured in dollars, and which, happily, appeal to the true artist.

Meanwhile it is stimulating to know that the listening public now estimated in millions thru the Saturday broadcasts, has learned to appreciate and enjoy the singing qualities of the American-trained artists.

In a more tangible aspect it is also satisfying to see greatly increased and youthful audiences, and the return of old subscribers as well as new. But above all, the deep gratitude of the entire organization goes to the Opera Guild, and the many friends whose generosity and loyalty have made possible the continuance and achievement of the Metropolitan.

Notwithstanding all this, there is unfortunately no reserve fund on which to draw for future new productions, no reserve for novelties or masterworks of less popular appeal, which should be maintained in the repertoire.

Undoubtedly the day will come when some such reserve fund will be found, with which to develop in time of peace, the projects begun in time of war.

If we remain united in our common love of good music, and its ideal presentation, we will insure for the present and future generations the highest standard of musical taste; just as the foundation of a better world will be assured, if we remain united in our common purpose of achieving a lasting peace.

Names, Dates and Places

Martial Singher is at least installed in a New York apartment where he is permitted to sing. When the Metropolitan baritone brought his wife, the former Eta Busch, and small sons, Charles and John, from South America last Spring, after a separation of over a year, he was effectively gagged by an unsympathetic landlady. "I don't care what your friends do," said Mrs. Goodstein, when told that Ezio Pinza might call on her tenant, but she strictly forbade operatic practise. The lofty perch which the Singhers have finally found on Central Park West now echoes happily with the baritone's reminiscences of his Pelléas, Valentin and Lescaut in the September Montreal season.

Mrs. Herbert Witherspoon, first Executive Secretary and Director of The Metropolitan Opera Guild, and more recently the leading executive of AGMA, has been appointed managing director of *Ballet International,* the new ballet group organized by George de Cuevas, which plans a fall season opening October 30 at the Park Theatre.

Richard Strauss is reported to have taken a stand against Nazi regulations last summer, when he refused to accept a dozen air raid refugees in his country house near Hitler's Berchtesgarten eyrie. The octogenarian pleaded his age and need of privacy as excuse and was threatened with cancellation of his birthday festivities in reprisal. On second thoughts the authorities decided to withdraw this obvious evidence of the composer's defiance and instead refused him a passport to Zurich, where he planned to conduct a gala performance of *Elektra.*

Pietro Mascagni, composer of *Cavalleria Rusticana,* who has also passed his eightieth birthday, was discovered in a modest Roman hotel by the allied armies which occupied the capital in June. One son had been killed in Ethiopia, another "tangled up with the Fascists." The ailing composer wept as he described his poverty and the low spiritual state of the country under Fascist rule, but brightened as he told how a French officer had permitted him and his wife to remain in their lodgings, which they had heard were to be requisitioned for military billeting.

Giuseppe de Luca was also discovered living quietly in Rome last summer, his house scarred by thirty-two splinters from the bomb which killed Virginio Gayda, next door. "I love this house," said the veteran baritone. "I built it and if I've got to die from bombs I will die in its ruins." De Luca showed a visitor a photograph of his childhood singing class, taken when he was nine years old, and pointed out a dark-eyed classmate. "This boy is now the Pope," he explained. "In those days I sang soprano, but the Pope sang contralto."

Grace Moore, who has not yet taken her vivid personality and golden voice to the armed forces overseas, has indirectly been of great service to the underground patriots in France. A recent despatch tells that Miss Moore's former chauffeur and gardener, Julien, had converted the soprano's villa, the Casa Lauretta near Cannes, into a relay station for patriots fleeing the Gestapo. Here more than fifty Frenchmen were fed, clothed and hidden during the four years of Nazi occupation.

Dimitri Shostakovich is completing the orchestration of an opera, *Rothschild's Violin* by a young Soviet composer, Benjamin Fleishman, who died fighting near Leningrad. Deeply impressed by the talent of his young colleague, Shostakovich wrote Fleishman's parents of his hope that the one act work, based on a story of Chekhov, would soon be heard.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE JUBILEE SEASON STATEMENT

Last July the Metropolitan Opera Association published its annual Statement of Operations for the season. The enthusiastic reaction of the press reached its climax in an editorial in the *New York Times*, which OPERA NEWS is proud to print in this issue.

In order to appreciate the various features selected for approval by the *Times*, we are glad to list a few of the most significant items in the statement.

The year's operations show a deficit of $110,500. Last year the deficit was listed as 202,600. Both of these figures include the tax bill. For 1944-45 the Association will pay approximately $115,000 less in real estate taxes than during the past year.

Thus, in the words of George A. Sloan, President of the Association, "the Directors have reason to expect that, with the continued cooperation of the entire personnel, artistic and managerial, the season 1944-45 will show no operating deficit or, if any deficit is incurred, that it will be relatively small in comparison with the deficits recorded for the past four years."

Other highlights of the statement:

$361,554.84 was contributed to the Metropolitan Opera Fund by 42,086 donors, New York state heading the list, California second in number of contributors, Ohio in amounts given.

"There is no convincing evidence of any special following for operas . . . given with English texts," said Mr. Johnson in his report. "*The Magic Flute* was established immediately as a successful addition to the repertory," but "there was meager response to the revival of *Falstaff*, artistically one of the highlights of the season. The presentation of opera in English is not a leading purpose of the management," continues Mr. Johnson.

Stressing the necessity of designing the repertory from the box office point of view, the General Manager recognizes a responsibility in building "for popular demand in the years to come "by making" further risks in contemporary art and long term investments in eclectic classics." He also looks to "a contemporary American expression of our own times."

A definite step in this direction is recorded by the announcement that the Metropolitan intends to produce a new short opera by an American composer in 1945-46. This will be chosen by competition offered in collaboration with the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University which has set aside funds for cash awards to the composer and librettist as well as a substantial contribution towards production costs.

Another legacy referred to in the statement is the Kathryn Long Trust for the development of operatic artists in the United States, to be administered by its trustees for this purpose as soon as the estate is finally settled.

Mr. Johnson also called attention to the valuable help of The Metropolitan Opera Guild, whose Ticket Service Department brought in over $96,000 last season.

Editorial from The New York Times,
August 4, 1944.

METROPOLITAN PROGRESS

The Metropolitan Opera Association's statement of operations for its season of 1943-44 is more than a report of facts and figures, in themselves a record of achievement. It is testimony to the remarkable progress made in the teeth of the difficulties and confusions of a war-torn world and in the course of the hardest decade in the history of the institution. Ten years ago its very existence was in peril. The present report, based upon figures of accomplishment, reaches the conclusion that with coming tax relief and the same degree of cooperation and sacrifice that the organization has received the season past from its executives, staff, artists and all unions involved in production, the Metropolitan may hope to reach the end of its 1944-45 season without a deficit.

Should this come to pass, it could fairly be called a reward of merit for all concerned in the result. In the period of years mentioned, the Metropolitan, with generous aid from the public, has come into possession of its theatre; has improved its stage and auditorium for the greater convenience of its patrons; has substantially reduced the prices of its seats at the same time that it heightened the standard of its performances under world-famous conductors; has developed its reportory so far as it might under necessary financial restrictions, and has brought to the front many new singers, principally young Americans. By means of radio, the splendid work of the Metropolitan Opera Guild and other helpful agencies combined in a far-flung plan, it has vastly increased its influence and its audiences; and at a time of national crisis and unprecedented need for such ministrations, has become a popular center of art and entertainment.

This is a far cry from the spectacular and socially ostentatious Metropolitan past. A new period has arrived in opera production and public response to it. A row of boxes, symptomatically, has vanished with the era that it decorated. The stage rather than the Golden Horseshoe has become the center of attention. The audiences, bigger and more democratic than ever before—and augmented by the presence in the city of thousands of the men and women of the armed forces, workers, and visitors engaged in war work—count less upon the glitter of the occasion and the glories of individual voices and reputations than upon the opera itself and the eloquence of the ensemble. No doubt radio and records have contributed conspicuously to the education of this new public and the kind of repertory in which it is interested. Mozart, Wagner, Debussy have reaped capacity audiences and thunderous applause previously reserved for the works of Puccini, Donizetti and the earlier Verdi. These changes have been met and partly shaped by the Metropolitan, with an adaptiveness which has conduced importantly to the number of its sold-out houses.

There is, finally, the fact that at a time when every other great opera house of the western world has either disappeared or suffered grievous impairment of its functions, the Metropolitan has held firmly, an indestructible citadel of the musico-dramatic art. Its position in its field, now supreme, will be yet stronger and more constructive following the war, when it is certain to be a stimulus to operatic production elsewhere through interchange with other lyric theatres of individual singers, the extension of its tours and the direct effect of its widely disseminated performances. Criticism of artistic details of these performances there has been and will be. There is much for the Metropolitan yet to do in point of modernization of its productions, development of its singers, extension of the repertory. But it has maintained and held aloft the traditions of the great art-form of which it is a symbol, and this on a broader basis of self-support and public approval than ever before in its history.

Opera in the Theatres of War

Mediterranean Area

Only twenty-five miles behind the front lines of the U. S. Army in Italy Lily Pons wound up her recent tour under USO auspices in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf Command, Africa and the Italian theatre of war. As usual the diminutive soprano found luck in the number thirteen. Her thirteen weeks overseas were a complete success. For the first time in thirteen years she was completely free from the nervous indigestion which usually attacks her before every performance. Indeed, she stated on her return, "It took the Army to cure me. I was in wonderful voice in spite of the heavy schedule." Also for the first time in her career Miss Pons reached the record of twenty-eight consecutive concerts in thirty days, with two programs offered in a single day. In Persia the thermometer rose to 120 in the shade, so on one occasion the diva wrapped a damp bath towel about her head in lieu of a wimple or snood and kept sufficiently cool to sing!

A first hand account of military reactions to Miss Pons and her husband comes from Captain James C. Clark, Jr., who incidentally, is a great-grandson of one of the original stockholders of the Metropolitan Opera in 1883. The Captain's V-Mail of July 22 follows:

"Two nights ago we had a very special treat—Lily Pons and her husband Andre Kostelanetz appeared and gave us a delightful concert. We have our own theatre and believe it or not our own conductor, Robert Lawrence, once music critic of the Herald-Tribune and a musician in his own right.

A Persian Army Camp applauds Lily Pons

USO Camp Shows

With his help an Italian orchestra was whipped—and I mean whipped into shape (Mr. Kostelanetz rehearsed them for nine hours straight almost) and then they played his arrangements of such things as Begin the Beguine *and* Show Boat. *They played really very creditably too. Miss Pons of course was divine. Such a glorious voice. She was dressed in a lovely flowered evening dress with a Flato necklace and couldn't have looked more Hattie Carnegie or prettier if she tried—which of course she did. How we loved it! The audience nearly tore the place down with their applause. We all felt very proud and possessive about her. The fine thing about artists of her calibre coming over here is that many in the audience would not have been able to hear her at home in person. Its the best way to bring fine music off its high remote perch and let a lot of people hear and see and share in an exciting experience."*

A recent letter from Corp. Robert Lawrence describes his recent experience conducting *Tosca* in Rome, with another Metropolitan prima donna, Maria Caniglia, in the title role.

"I was engaged for two performances of Tosca *at the Royal Opera House in Rome," writes the co-author of* The Metropolitan Opera Guide," *for August 23 and 25, with Maria Caniglia (in divine form, she has grown immeasurably as an artist), Ferrucio Tagliavini as Cavaradossi (he is the rising lyric tenor of Italy, in the vein of Schipa), and a young baritone Paolo Silveri as Scarpia. The two performances were so successful that I was engaged for a third with Adriana Guerrieri in place of Caniglia on August 29. On the last evening the City of Rome presented me with a handsome inscribed reproduction in bronze, marble and silver of the emblem of Rome—Romulus, Remus and the wolf."*

"The press was magnificent, with the general tenor of opinion being surprise that an American could conduct with such authority.

Corp. Robert Lawrence congratulates Maria Caniglia, Messrs. Silveri and Tagliavini

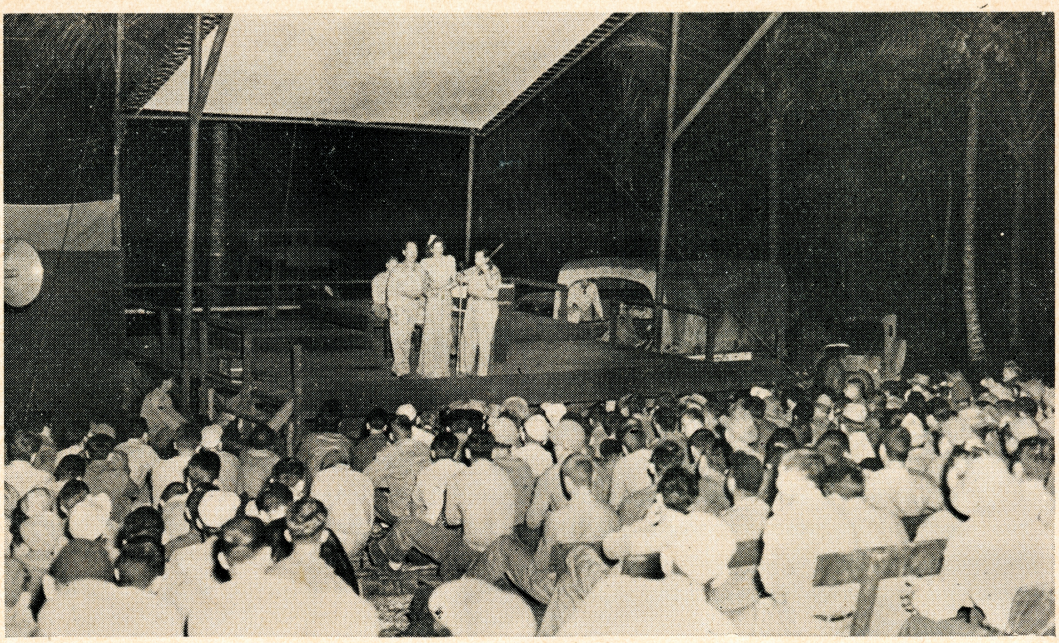
To quote the Corriere di Roma: *'The novelty, indeed so to speak the clue of the performance, was the conducting and the coordination of the opera which was entrusted, after so many years, to a foreign* maestro, *Robert Lawrence. Young Maestro Lawrence was a revelation to the Roman public. He directed the Puccini score with uncommon talent: precision, vigor, expression, all the values of the orchestra and stage in excellent relief. The success of this version of* Tosca *was extraordinarily vivid.'"*

"Italia Libera *says 'Robert Lawrence, new to our stage, directed very well: we could not have imagined such interpretive sensibility applied to an Italian score by a foreign conductor!'"*

"I also had a symphony concert with the Radio Rome Orchestra and am doing weekly symphonies and opera at the Headquarters of the Air Force Service Command, Special Service Theatre."

Pacific Area

Following in the footsteps of Lansing Hatfield last year, another group of serious musicians toured the Islands of the South Pacific for nine weeks this summer under USO Camp Shows, travelling 20,000 miles



Jagel, Stoska and Stern at a USO Camp Show in the South Pacific

by air to play to an estimated total of 140,000 soldiers, sailors and marines. Their smallest audience was ten; their largest 10,000 sailors at a New Hebrides base.

The five members of the Camp Show Quintet, as the unit was called, included two Metropolitan artists, Frederick Jagel and Robert Weede. Polyna Stoska, soprano, was the only woman in the group. Isaac Stern, violinist, met the vicissitudes of his delicate instrument by using tennis-racket cat gut for his G string. Alex Zakin played on every sort of a piano and organ.

Again we turn to a letter from 1st Lieut. Thomas E. Brown, U.S.M.C.R., to indicate the reaction of the men.

"Just took time out for the evening's entertainment," writes our correspondent, "something special—a USO show and a super-special one at that.

"Five 'long haired' musicians from the Metropolitan and concert stage came out here to entertain us. . . . Am not sure of the spelling of their names but believe me they were wonderful. The best show I've seen out here. They made every other troupe seem like rank amateurs. They were showmen from way back.

"As you can well imagine a large percentage of the lads were a trifle disgruntled that we were having long hair instead of jive. These artists handled them masterfully and had them sitting on the edges of their seats, mouths open. The gal was tal *(about six feet) and quite attractive—she really held them spell-bound."*

"Somebody shouted a request for 'Pistol-Packing Mama.' She retorted with the statement she'd forgotten her pistol. She got along fine from then on, except when one of our special bugs made her jump about ten feet.

"They would each sing something everybody knew first, then an operatic aria—then more popular. We heard songs from Show Boat, Oklahoma, Rigoletto, Figaro, *etc."*

"All in all the evening was a huge success and went off beyond all expectations. This is the first troupe of its kind to be sent overseas."

LAWRENCE IN AUSTRALIA

In word just received from Marjorie Lawrence, the soprano paid glowing tribute to the 50,000 service men and women—for whom she had recently sung in northern Australia. She traveled in planes, in trains, by jeeps, by car and slept in tents and bamboo huts . . . servicemen called her "the best trooper of us all." At one camp, a complete stage was erected especially for her and a settee provided. When the curtains opened, as far as she could see, there was a packed mass of 10,000 troops, some even sitting in trees. Convoys, packed to every inch with eager soldiers, kept depositing their load and going back for more. "For five minutes," Miss Lawrence admitted, "I could not utter a sound." An intense hush prevailed as she opened her program with the singing of *The Lord's Prayer* and was broken only by repeated cries of "More, more!" At the close of her program, the star was almost smothered with huge bouquets of wild orchids and other native Australian flowers gathered for her by the men in uniform.

One of Miss Lawrence's biggest thrills came from the reception given her by servicemen in the Heidelberg Military Hospital in Melbourne Australia. She passed through the wards in her wheel chair, evoking hearty cheers. Wherever she went, the singer was surrounded by an adoring group of servicemen and the entourage proceeded through the hospital in hilarious fashion, Miss Lawrence stopping to chat with the bed-ridden patients who couldn't join the grand parade.

Following her vists to the military camps in northern Australia, the dramatic soprano appeared in concert in Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide. In Victoria she faced her own folk in the tiny fibro-cement Globe Theatre at Winchelsea, her first visit home in five years.

At a civic reception at the Shire Hall Miss Lawrence held audience in her wheel-chair between two wood fires on which sat the great black iron kettle for afternoon tea. People from all over the district filed through the great Hall to greet her. She welcomed almost every one with a Christian name and a term of affection.

In the theatre . . . the audience gathered hushed, expectant. Lights were lowered. 'My first song," Miss Lawrence said, "will be the recitative and aria of Nitrocris from Handel's *Belshazzar.*" A baby in the audience bawled lustily. "Well," laughed the soprano, "he doesn't appear to like it."

Marjorie Lawrence is still an Australian country girl at heart.

Marjorie Lawrence flies to Australia

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA THRIVES IN WARTIME

By ALEXANDER FRIED

Music Editor of San Francisco Examiner

It seems odd, in retrospect, to think that the fate of the San Francisco Opera Company quivered in the balance when this country found itself at war. Two successful seasons have already vindicated the post-Pearl Harbor optimists who insisted that the company continue. They seem to be further justified in the third wartime autumn opera season, opening with *Aida* at the War Memorial Opera House September 29.

As war activity centers more and more in San Francisco—a great shipping base in the attack that is aimed at Japan—our enlarged city shows a correspondingly greater devotion to opera.

Bruno of Hollywood

Lily Djanel as Salome

"Season ticket sale," reports Paul Posz, business manager, "far exceeds that of any season in the twenty-two years' existence of the San Francisco Opera Association. The number of guarantors has broken all records. When our single ticket sale had been under way less than a fortnight, indications suggested a sellout at all our twenty performances in San Francisco and eleven performances elsewhere in California."

Popular interest is also an index that Director Gaetano Merola has drawn together a highly interesting repertory and an attractive roster of leading artists.

Despite wartime technical hindrances, three productions in the repertory of fifteen operas will be new.

True, the company has presented *Salomé* and *Falstaff* before. But it did so when our modern Opera House was still only a dream and the scenery had to be built for improvised auditorium stages.

Now, however, Stage Director Armando Agnini has designed and built brand new sets not only for these operas but also for *The Tales of Hoffmann*. For while Offenbach's romantic fantasy is not entirely strange to this city, the San Francisco Opera Company never has sung it.

Salomé and *Falstaff* are operas of ensemble effect, no doubt. Yet each of them focusses personal interest on its title role character. Years ago, our Salomé was Jeritza, our Falstaff, Antonio Scotti.

This time the decadent beauty of Judea's

Morton Photographs

Valentino and Cehanovsky in a San Francisco Manon

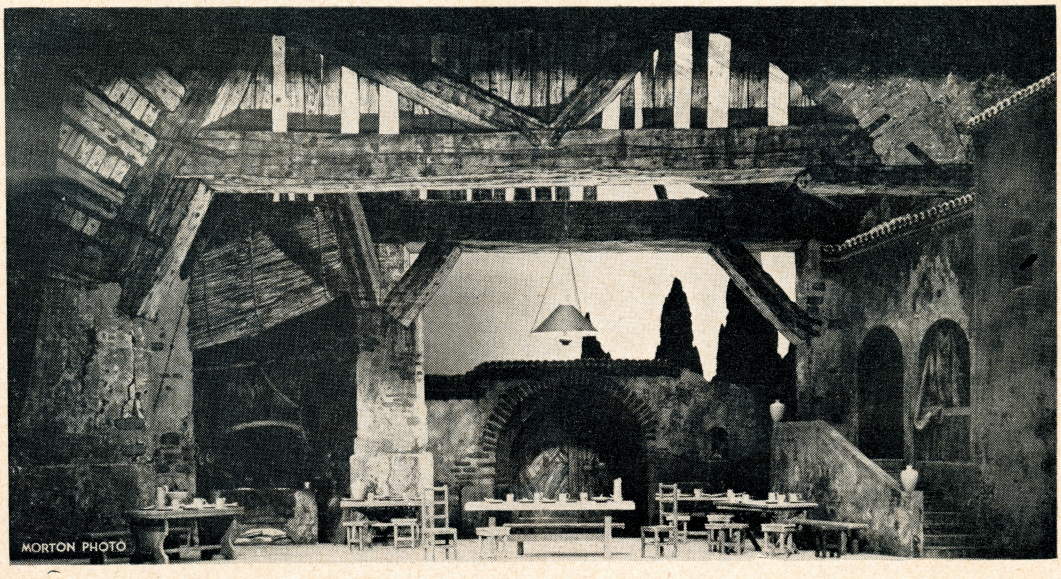
court will be a prima donna whom we have been awaiting with uncommon interest: Lily Djanel. And Falstaff will be that jolly basso, Salvatore Baccaloni.

Let us look at other new elements of the season:

Vivian Della Chiesa, not unknown to us in concert, will make her local opera bow in such lyric soprano roles as Mistress Ford and Marguerite. Stepping from operetta to opera, Virginia MacWatters—of New York's *Rosalinda* cast—will be Musetta, Oscar in *A Masked Ball*, Olympia and Micaela.

For the lyric tenor roles of *Falstaff* and *Martha*, Bruno Landi has already arrived from his Mexico City opera season. Margaret Harshaw's numerous contralto vehicles will range from the lurid Herodias to the comic Dame Quickly, with the dramatic sorceress of the *Masked Ball* as well as Amneris.

The fact that Risë Stevens is currently pleasing an enormous movie public in Bing Crosby's *Going My Way* certainly will add still another facet of interest to her first appearance here as Carmen.



The Tavern Scene from La Forza del Destino in San Francisco

Baccaloni as Falstaff

Foto Sudak

And Jan Peerce, already admired in *Lucia* and *Rigoletto*, will add to his achievements a San Francisco performance in which New York has greatly praised him: Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera.*

Familiar favorites?

There will be Lily Pons *(Lakmé, Lucia, Rigoletto).* There will be Licia Albanese *(Manon, Falstaff, Martha, Hoffmann).* There will be Stella Roman in *Aïda, Masked Ball* and *Forza del Destino."*

Tenors will include Frederick Jagel, versatile as always; Raoul Jobin, in several French roles, and Charles Kullman *(Bohême, Carmen* and *Manon).*

It would be hard to imagine a San Francisco Opera *Faust* without the magnetic Ezio Pinza. He will be here. Meantime Leonard Warren's superb voice will be heard here for the first time in *Aïda, Masked Ball* and *Faust.*

Valuable members of many a cast will include Hertha Glaz, Mexico's Roberto Silva, Francesco Valentino, Ivan Petroff, Lorenzo Alvary and John Garris.

Besides its three home series, the company will tour. Sacramento, ninety miles northwest of here, has so built up its taste for opera that it will now have three Saturday night performances. San Jose, fifty miles to our south, is now added to the circuit and will hear a Lily Pons *Lucia.* And the usual post-season week in the South will offer a full quota of six performances in Los Angeles with one in Pasadena.

Rise Stevens as Carmen in Going My Way

Paramount Pictures

BIG VOICES FOR LIGHT OPERA

A dozen Metropolitan artists have recently been welcomed to the light opera field. Their stream-lined personalities have won them roles which a generation ago would have been closed to their predecessors. Their full-size voices have grown so familiar to the radio public that they are urgently demanded by audiences which in other days would have been satisfied by the chirpings and pipings of a smaller race.

Jarmila Novotna was one of the first to be featured on upper Broadway, where she added beauty and dignity to the New Opera Company's production of *Helen Goes to Troy*. But Mme. Novotna was merely returning to the field where she had first won fame in Vienna, and the role which Max Reinhardt had altered especially for her.

Irra Petina is another operetta headliner to emerge from the Metropolitan stage. After several summer seasons in light opera on the West Coast, she reached New York as the glamorous diva Louisa Giovanni in *Song of Norway*, an operetta based on Edward Grieg's music which is at present sold out at the Imperial Theatre.

Jan Kiepura crowded them in at *The Merry Widow* all last winter and is billed to open at the New York City Center on October 7, with his wife Martha Eggerth leaving the new baby to return to the title role.

Annamary Dickey is announced to appear in *Rhapsody*, a musical work based on the music of Fritz Kreisler, together with the Metropolitan bass John Gurney at the end of the month.

Morton Bowe, a 1944 winner of the Metropolitan Auditions of the Air, who has for years been known for his Gilbert and Sullivan heroes, was occupied in the Dallas light opera season last summer, as also was Natalie Bodanya.

Irra Petina as the Prima Donna in Song of Norway

Marita Farell sang *The Chocolate Soldier* in Louisville.

John Garris took the leading role of *The Gypsy Baron* in Detroit at the end of May.

Richard Bonelli was cast as Strauss himself in *The Waltz King* performances in San Francisco this Fall.

Lansing Hatfield is already rehearsing for the musical version of the tropical drama *Rain*, which is to be produced this Fall under the title of *Sadie Thompson*, with Ethel Merman in the title role.

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CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

Subscribers to OPERA NEWS who are changing addresses should notify the Metropolitan Opera Guild Membership Department ONE MONTH before the change is to take effect. Both old and new address must be given.

CHICAGO OPERA COMPANY TO OPEN THIRTY-THIRD SEASON

With Fausto Cleva, for more than twenty years chorus master of the Metropolitan Opera Company, as its new general artistic director, and featuring twenty-six leading singers of the Metropolitan, the Chicago Opera Company will open its thirty-third season of performances on Monday evening, October 16, at the Civic Opera House.

Carmen, with Gladys Swarthout, Christina Carroll, Kurt Baum and Alexander Sved, will initiate the five-week season.

Their operatic appetites whetted by the Metropolitan's performances in Chicago last Spring, midwesterners have been responding enthusiastically to the return of Chicago's company to its own opera house after a year's silence. Requests for reservations have reached the box office from five states.

Other operas to be heard during the week of October 16 include *Traviata* on Wednesday, October 18, *La Bohème* on Friday, October 20, *Aïda* on Saturday afternoon, October 21, and *Die Walküre* Saturday evening.

In addition to Miss Swarthout, Miss Carroll, Mr. Baum and Mr. Sved, Metropolitan singers engaged for the season include Bidu Sayao, Josephine Antoine, Helen Traubel, Kerstin Thorborg, Zinka Milanov, Astrid Varnay, Jan Peerce, Robert Weede, Richard Bonelli, Ezio Pinza, Nino Martini, Raoul Jobin, Martial Singher, Lawrence Tibbett, Giovanni Martinelli, Leonard Warren, Frederick Jagel, Emery Darcy, Nicola Moscona, Herbert Janssen, Virgilio Lazzari and Wilfred Engelman.

Other leading roles will be sung by Jeannette MacDonald, Vivian della Chiesa, Marjory Hess and Mario Berini.

Gustaf Bergmann, known in musical circles as the witty and dynamic husband of Contralto Kerstin Thorborg, will direct a revival of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, for which he has devised new and modern settings with striking contrasts of light and shadow. In the Debussy work, not heard in Chicago since 1931, Bidu Sayao will sing Mélisande; Martial Singher, Pelléas; Lawrence Tibbett, Golaud; Nicola Moscona, Arkel and Doris Doe, Geneviève.

Mr. Bergman, formerly general manager and stage director of opera in Sweden, will also be responsible for *Carmen*, *Traviata*, *Trovatore* and *La Bohème*.

Gladys Swarthout prepares to open the Chicago Season with Carmen

Singher and Sayao as Pelléas and Mélisande

Another novelty of the season will be *Roméo et Juliette* last given by the Chicago Opera in 1939, which will feature Jeanette MacDonald and Mario Berini. It will be directed by Lothar Wallerstein, Metropolitan stage director, who will also be in charge of the productions of *Aïda*, *Walküre*, *Otello* and *Tosca*. Armando Agnini of the San Francisco Opera Company, will direct *Faust* and *Rigoletto*.

Konrad Neuger, Metropolitan chorus master, has been rehearsing the newly organized Chicago Opera chorus during the summer; the ballet is under the direction of Boris Romanoff, former Metropolitan ballet master.

Three performances have been scheduled by the Company in Milwaukee. On November 7 it will play *Traviata;* on November 9 *Roméo et Juliette;* and on November 14 *Faust*.

BACK HOME TO THE OPERA

An ice cream soda? A good hot bath with unlimited quantities of soap? A week in a bed with supercoil springs?

What are the first pleasures a soldier plans, thinking of his homecoming? The mailbag of Earle R. Lewis has one answer: His former Monday evening opera seats.

Col. Earl LeRoy Wood, Port of Embarkation commanding officer of the Army Service Forces Station Hospital, Los Angeles, formerly of Newark, writes Mr. Lewis, after two years' active service, that he expects to be home for the coming opera season and would like to have the same seats he formerly occupied.

"The two past seasons that the Metropolitan has flourished during war-time," the Colonel comments, "have been a delight to me, though I was far away. One of the pleasantest aspects of our normal peaceful life which I contemplate is the opportunity to enjoy the Metropolitan Opera again."

Donizetti's Regiment Occupies Piedmont

By NANCY ANN HARRIS

The hardships imposed by the second world war, have seen the creation of the Piedmont Festival of Music and Art in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Before the restricted transportation of war time, those Americans who lived in small towns went to large cities for their concerts, operas, and art exhibits, and those who could afford it visited the festivals at Salzburg and Glyndebourne.

In Winston-Salem a group of local citizens, realizing that our efforts at home, like those of our men in blue and khaki overseas must be directed to the building, here and now, of the "brave new world" which lies beyond the ruins of war, had the vision to found the First Piedmont Festival of Music and Art in 1943. More than 500 people participated in the production of an opera, an oratorio, an orchestral concert, and outstanding exhibits of art, photography, and handicrafts.

The 1944 Piedmont Festival of Music and Art, presented July 19-23, in Winston-Salem's R. J. Reynolds Memorial Auditorium, with more than 1,000 participants, was enlarged to include drama, performances both by and for children, and participation by the Negro race. Struggling under the strain following the invasion and a polio

Principals and Chorus of the Piedmont Daughter of the Regiment Woodrow Wilson

epidemic, which caused the cancellation of almost all the children's events, the festival was highly successful, drawing capacity audiences of several thousand adults.

Not all of the credit goes to local folk. George King Raudenbush, founder and director of the Harrisburg, Pa. and Toledo, Ohio symphony orchestras, guest conductor of the New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestras, made his first Southern appearance in Winston-Salem at the 1943 Festival. He was enthusiastically recalled by the Piedmont Festival Board of Trustees as Festival conductor for 1944.

Five outstanding musical events comprised this year's Festival program, which opened with Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise,* presented by the Festival Chorus of 225 voices, supported by the Festival Symphony Orchestra. Of these North Carolina's premiere performance of Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment,* produced by Clifford Bair, Head of the Department of Voice and Opera Dramatics at Salem College, and opera consultant for the National Federation of Music Clubs, was the one operatic venture and climax of achievement for the Festival.

Singing as a unit in the opera was Winston-Salem's large and recently founded male chorus, directed by H. Grady Miller, Minister of Music at the First Baptist Church. A unique achievement in time of war, this organization of 50 men served as the inspiration for the selection of this particular opera.

"We tacked on a second finale in the form of a series of tableaux," wrote Mr. Bair, "using *Yankee Doodle* and a male chorus, *This Is My Country.* In the last chorus the women's voices sang snatches of *America* as a countertheme"—a dashing variation of the Donizetti score.

Dances for the opera were under the direaction of Jacqueline Dorminy, who, in 1939, was appointed by Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, to represent the United States at the International Folk Dance Festival in England.

"Highlights" of the Piedmont Festival, including excerpts from the opera, oratorio, and orchestral concert, were presented in a morning musicale at the Winston-Salem Negro Teacher's College to a capacity audience composed of faculty, students and friends of the institution.

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Montreal Opera Season

More than a dozen Metropolitan headliners travelled to Canada last month, where Wilfred Pelletier conducted the Montreal Festival Orchestra in a series of operatic performances. This season was the fifth for which Maestro Pelletier was responsible and included the production of seven operas at the St. Denis Theatre in Montreal, four at Massey Hall, Toronto and two at the Ottawa Auditorium.

Among the familiar representations of Metropolitan favorites during the Canadian season were Lily Pons' Lucia, Rose Bampton's Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni,* opposite Ezio Pinza, Salvatore Baccaloni and Bidu Sayao, Lawrence Tibbett's Golaud with Martial Singher as Pelléas, Raoul Jobin's des Grieux and Faust, Nino Martini's Almaviva in *The Barber,* Jan Peerce's Edgardo. Patrice Munsel sang her first Rosina under Maestro Pelletier's baton, opposite Francesco Valentino in the title role. Nadine Conner repeated her successful Marguerite of last season for the St. Denis audience.

Thus again the "godfather of the young American singer" championed many talents secured through his own efforts in his native Canada, where he also serves as director of the Montreal Conservatory and ranks as a favorite son.

GOOD NEIGHBORS IN OPERA

By FRIEDE F. ROTHE

The opera season of 1944 in Rio de Janeiro was as much a triumph for the jeweler, dressmaker and coiffeur as for the singers on the stage.

Like most Latin-Americans Brazilians are in no hurry. Intermissions are long, giving everyone plenty of time for his cup of *cafe zinho*, a demi tasse half filled with sugar, and an opportunity to admire his neighbors. Often an opera lasts long after midnight.

The *Teatro Municipale* itself is an old-fashioned, handsome affair, not so rococo as one would have expected, nor so rich, but still graced with grandeur, even if on a very small scale. The house seats less than two thousand, with two tiers of stall boxes. It was once acoustically perfect, but suffered when the roof was raised several years ago for the building of a larger top balcony. The most impressive feature by far is the big and well-equipped stage—perhaps the cleanest, best-kept stage of my experience. The sets, though somewhat worn, were also unusually good. In many productions costumes, too, proved to be above the average.

Otto Rothschild

Jennie Tourel prepares for Carmen in Rio

Silvio Piergili, as general organizer and artistic director, does a superhuman job of running the season, overcoming almost insurmountable obstacles. He benefits from the invaluable assistance from his two right hands, Messrs. Pelos and Goosemann.

The season opened with sartorial splendor on August 2. As a patriotic gesture the opera given was Carlos Gomes' *Odaleia.* The cast was mostly native and had nothing especially to recommend it. Even the critics protested the whole performance.

The gala subscription season started two evenings later with *Carmen.* Jennie Tourel and Charles Kullman played the tragic lovers, and the following day the critics hailed the performance as the opening gun of the season and la Tourel as the greatest French Carmen they had yet been privileged to see.

A Brazilian singer, Alice Ribeiro, made a tremendous impression as Micaela.

Leonard Warren, the third member of the Metropolitan upholding the Rio season, repeated his success of the past two seasons. *Falstaff,* in which he starred for the first time in Rio as well as directed, proved to be a little beyond the Brazilian public, which prefers to applaud well-known arias. Mr. Warren more than made up for that, however, with great ovations for his roles in

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THE TEXAS COMPANY

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John Brownlee and Lorenzo Alvary (2nd row R.) in a Mexico City Don Giovanni

Traviata and *Rigoletto*, before his sprained ankle necessitated his withdrawal after the *Pagliacci* of September 8.

Charles Kullman shouldered the tenor's duties of the season, keeping busy in *Carmen, Bohème, Madama Butterfly, Traviata, Manon* and *Rigoletto* throughout the eight weeks of opera.

Zinka Milanov's unfortunate inability to come to Rio at the eleventh hour put a kink into the season and threw such favorites out of the announced repertory as *Norma, Forza del Destino* and *Ballo in Maschera.*

In Mexico City Sir Thomas Beecham directed a Mozart Festival during July and August, in which *Don Giovanni, The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Magic Flute* were each presented four times. The soloists included such Metropolitan artists as John Brownlee, Lorenzo Alvary and John Dudley, while the chorus was made up of gifted students from the Conservatory of Mexico City. Kurt Adler, also of the Metropolitan, acted as assistant conductor.

In order to show their appreciation for the Mexican people, Sir Thomas and Lady Beecham gave their services at a benefit concert for the Mexican Red Cross.

The Boston Grand Opera Company

The Boston Grand Opera Company is scheduled to open its first season of four opera performances at the Boston Opera House in Boston, Mass., beginning Friday Evening, September 29, 1944 with *Tosca;* followed by *La Traviata,* on Saturday night; *Rigoletto* on Sunday (Matinee); and *Carmen* on Sunday night.

The casts include leading Metropolitan artists. *Tosca* will have Leonora Corona in the name part with Armand Tokatyan as Cavaradossi; Alexander Sved as Scarpia; *Traviata* with Virginia Pemberton as Violetta and A. Tokatyan as Alfredo; *Carmen* with Lily Djanel; *Rigoletto* with Doris Marinelli and Rocco Pandiscio and others.

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Speaking of Cincinnati Summer Opera

By CHARLOTTE L. SHOCKLEY

A fine performance on August 5th of Puccini's *Tosca* brought the twenty-third six-week season of Cincinnati summer grand opera to a thrilling close after a total of thirty-six performances of fourteen different operas presented nightly except Monday in the natural beauty of the Cincinnati Zoological Gardens.

Oscar F. Hild, dynamic managing director of the Cincinnati Summer Opera Association for a decade, again had the fine artistic cooperation of Fausto Cleva who rounded out his tenth year as chief conductor, ably assisted by Karl Kritz, Antonio Dell'Orefice, and Thomas Phillip Martin. Anthony Stivanello staged the productions and Lillian Moore directed the ballet. As a special feature, the colorful but unpredictable baton tactics of Sir Thomas Beecham were displayed at two performances each of *Aïda* and *Carmen*, and one of *Pagliacci*.

Cincinnatians renewed footlight acquaintance with favorite artists of former years, and met new singers, among them Metropolitan sopranos Licia Albanese and Lily Djanel; contralto Thelma Altman; baritone John Brownlee, already a May Festival favorite; and basso Alexander Kipnis, last heard here in the Matinee Musicale Concert Series of 1937.

Particularly interesting was the system of presenting various artists in the same role, establishing a comparative standard for the repertory. Bidu Sayao's liquid voice in her only appearance of the season, Licia Albanese's dramatic intensity, and Marita Farell's exquisite realism were brought to the grateful role of Mimi in three different performances opposite the dashing Latin Quarter charm of Charles Kullman's poet and the

Osborne and O'Hagan

Robert Weede as Rigoletto in Cincinnati

first Rodolfo of Franco Perulli, who is fast becoming a matinee idol. Rose Bampton, Gertrude Ribla, and Stella Roman sang contrasting Aïdas opposite the Amneris of Anna Kaskas, Kerstin Thorborg, and glamorous Coe Glade who also alternated as Azucena in *Trovatore* to the Count di Luna of Angelo Pilotto, Alexander Sved, and Francesco Valentino. In *Carmen*, Lily Djanel's orange-sucking, dancing heroine, Gladys Swarthout's refined version of the role, and Coe Glade's elemental gypsy portrayal duetted with the Escamillos of Claudio Frigerio, Alexander Sved, John Brownlee, and Francesco Valentino, with the Don Jose's of Raoul Jobin, Charles Kullman, and Jacques

Gerard, while Christina Carroll shared the role of Micaela with Marita Farell.

Sved, Valentino, and Weede shed their parental influence as Rigoletto on the several Gildas of Agata Borzi, Josephine Antoine, and Doris Marinelli, and on the Dukes of Perulli and Felix Knight. Sved, Frigerio, and Valentino as the elder Germont all comforted Perulli as Alfredo. The Canios of Jobin, Sidney Rayner, and Pasquale Ferrara stabbed the Neddas of Farell, Marguerite Piazza, and Era Tognoli before the sadistic fury of Pilotto and Weede as Tonio. With a different opera every night, the changing casts heightened audience interest and whetted the appetite for intelligent comparisons.

The season's largest crowds almost filled the pavilion's 3,500 capacity seating to hear Sayao and Kullman in *La Boheme*, Albanese in *La Traviata*, Antoine and Weede in *Rigoletto*, and Roman in *Tosca*. In addition to the operas mentioned, most enthusiastic applause was given to performance of *Martha* in English with William Hain as Lionel, Antoine singing the title role and Thelma Altman contributing a delicious Nancy; *Samson et Dalila* with Thorborg and Jobin; *Aïda* with Ribla; *Carmen* with Glade and Gerard; and *Trovatore* with Bampton, Valentino, and Glade.

Interesting sidelights on the 1944 season include the first Marguerite of Christina Carroll, the initial Rodolfo of Perulli, and the first American Mario Cavaradossi of Jacques Gerard. A series of stage accidents momentarily incapacitated Wilfred Engelman who fell on his sword in *Samson;* Lillian Moore who sprained her leg in *Aïda;* and a chorus soprano who fell from a bench on which she was standing in the Lillas Pastia scene of *Carmen;* the small street boy in *Carmen* clutched his rapidly descending breeches while he gazed at Sir Thomas Beecham's goatee.

Despite the high artistic standard maintained, attendance was cut by wartime transportation restrictions and the stiff competition encountered by impresario Hild from the newly organized opera seasons of Mexico and our west coast. It was not always possible to announce the casts sufficiently far in advance to assure complete public support. It is hoped that the drive for a guarantee fund for the 1945 season will place the Cincinnati Summer Opera Association in a strategic position to line up singers and repertory well in advance of the opening dates next summer. An exciting possibility for the Company's next season is the tentative plan for a televised version of one of the performances.

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METROPOLITAN OPERA STARS SHED GLAMOR ON LOS ANGELES

The Opera Guild of Southern California Announces Autumn Plans

By CEDRIC HART

The Opera Guild of Southern California, following its recent incorporation as a non-profit organization, has officially declared that one of its prime objectives is to help bring into realization Los Angeles' great dream and urgent need of an opera house of its own. With this important announcement, which immediately received city-wide approval, Mrs. Arthur Bergh, president of the Guild, announced the affiliation of the new corporation with The Metropolitan Opera Guild.

A full season's program to increase and stimulate the rapid growing interest in opera here has already been inaugurated. This plan was put to fruitful result when the National Grand Opera Company, under the direction of Giorgio D'Andria, made its initial appearance in lost Angeles, presenting a three week mid-summer season of popular repertory July 17th to August 5th. Members of the Guild attended a rehearsal of *Carmen*, and a reception for the stars of the company was given in the home of Mrs. Walter Schmidt, a Guild Director, and president of the Opera Reading Club of Hollywood.

Kurt Baum and his bride Renate Schall

Otto Rothschild

The season was well-presented and a popular success. Several Metropolitan Opera stars gave the excellent mountings of stage director Armando Agnini the necessary sparkle. Zinka Milanov, Kurt Baum, Alexander Sved, Nicola Moscona, Louis D'Angelo, and the perennial Lodovico Oliviero were among those who gave the season authority.

Milanov and Baum created such a success in *Aïda* that two repeat performances were given. For Baum, the event was truly in the nature of an operatic honeymoon, for the tenor had just been married to the former Renate Schall. The tenor was teamed with Milanov in several

(*Continued on page* 26)

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AFTER SPOTLIGHTS — MILESTONES

The total edition of The Metropolitan Opera Guild's jubilee publication, *Spotlights on the Stars* has been sold, so it will be impossible to accept any further orders.

A new volume, however, will be ready for Thanksgiving Day delivery. This is a condensed history of The Metropolitan Opera House, written by Mrs. John DeWitt Peltz in direct response to the many requests for such a book which have been received from music students, libraries and opera lovers from coast to coast. The book will be called *Metropolitan Opera Milestones* and will be profusely illustrated.

There will be two editions, issued simultaneously. One in a stiff paper cover, will sell for 50c, the other bound in paper over boards, will cost $1.00. To be assured of early delivery, we suggest that orders be placed at once.

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Officers of the Opera Guild of Southern California confer with Mayor Fletcher Bowron of Los Angeles; Mrs. Arthur Bergh, President; Mrs. Elmer Belt, Secretary and Mrs. Harvey S. Mudd, First Vice-President

stirring performances. Sved was also acclaimed, and Winifred Heidt did some conquering of her own as Carmen, Amneris, and in other roles. Norina Greco, Josephine Tuminia, and Lucielle Browning added much to the general taste. The young American lyric tenor, Corporal Eugene Conley of the Army Air Force, here on leave, was a real hit. Conductor Angelo Canarutto won admiration and respect. News of his death since that time shocked opera lovers who were looking forward to his engaement with the San Francisco Opera this fall.

Following the general meeting of the Guild on September 21st, plans were being laid for several functions to take place during the annual fall visit of the San Francisco Opera Company here in the Shrine Auditorium, October 30 to November 5. News of those events, including the new Opera Merit Award of the local Guild will appear in the next issue of Opera News. The September meeting featured a talk by Isabel Morse Jones, music editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, on "The Glamor of Opera."

The main mission of the Opera Guild of Southern California is to help the general cause of opera here, to further public appreciation, and to give assistance to operatic musical and cultural programs of an educational character. The Guild's activities include operatic programs, lectures on various phases of opera, meetings, and exhibits of operatic interest. An opera museum of historic mementos and items of operatic interest has been started, and an operatic library, of scores, recordings, libretti, and books is being collected.

Officers, directors, and members of the Guild include many of the city's leading cultural and civic leaders. California's Governor Earl Warren, a strong exponent of opera and who is interested in a tangible advancement of all of the cultural arts, has just accepted membership on the Advisory Board.

Officers serving with Mrs. Arthur Bergh, president, are: Mrs. Harvey S. Mudd, first vice-president; Durward Howes, second vice-president; John Anson Ford, third vice-president; Mrs. Elmer Belt, secretary; Mrs. Gordon Wattles, treasurer. Board of Directors, following incorporation of the Guild: the above names and Mrs. Walter Boyd, Cedric Hart, John N. Hurtt, Mrs. Leiland Atherton Irish, Mrs. Jason S. Joy, Mrs. Walter Schmidt, Mrs. Alfred Wallenstein, Van Rensselaer Wilbur, and Mrs. Phillip Zozelein.

The Advisory Board includes: Earle C. Anthony, L. E. Behymer, Mayor Fletcher Bowron, Asa V. Call, Mrs. Eric Cleugh, Mrs. Albert Crutcher, Henry O. Duque, Nathaniel Finston, Mrs. Ernest Fishbaugh, Mrs. Edmund Gale, Don E. Gilman, Mrs. Gordon Hair, Mrs. John Wesley Hirras, Atwater Kent, Jesse Lasky, Miss Rosemary Lick, Peter de Lima, Mrs. Robert Millikan, Harvey S. Mudd, Gurney E. Newlin, Morgan Padelford, Neil Petree, William Richardson, J. Walter Schneider, Donald V. Thornburgh, C. E. Toberman, Mrs. Howard Verbeck, Alfred Wallenstein, Elmer Wilson, and Walter Wanger.

The practical idealism and great accomplishments of The Metropolitan Opera Guild and of its inspired founder-president, Mrs. August Belmont, have set a standard and example which members of the new guild here ardently hope will be emulated and achieved. The mother Guild has given a strong and encouraging hand to its lusty young western affiliate and it is our sincere wish that the new organization will prove to be for Los Angeles what The Metropolitan Opera Guild is to opera lovers everywhere.

Wanted: A Soprano in the Aleutians

ROSSINI NEEDS A ROSINA

By CORPORAL HAL SYKES

June 3, 1944.

This comes from one of the Aleutian outposts and from a music lover who has often stood at the Met, who once lost a job because he took off from work to hear a Helen Traubell recital and who now works as a member of the staff of this Aleutian outpost's radio station.

(I also double by doing a radio and movie column for a daily newspaper, whose editor, in person, is Corporal Dashiell Hammett, the famous writer, who is as real and rational and regular a guy as I've ever met.)

My reason for writing this should interest you: Here it is: Tomorrow afternoon (and it is in regular Met Opera broadcast tradition, being Saturday) we present the no-doubt Aleutian premiere of opera. We have chosen (and I'm the Milton Cross for the occasion, being something in the nature of a *Largo al factotum* at the station) Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, to be done in Italian, mainly because the speed of the music doesn't admit a hurried English translation, and we have tenor trouble, just like the Met when they do things in English.

Our cast: A staff sergeant from a special service company, who comes from Hartford, Connecticut, and has a voice something like Tito Schipa's. He will sing the role of Count Almaviva, but in civilian life he was a barber. His name is Joseph Russo.

Our Figaro, who doubles as the first voice in the opera's opening is Charles Wood, midwesterner, baritone soloist in the Post's band.

Our orchestra and the director for the performance is PFC Henry Holt, who as Hans Horowitz was a member of NBC's original First Piano Quartet.

We're doing a twenty-five minute adaptation of the first act: the first scene, Almaviva's serenade, Figaro's entrance and part of his *Largo al Factotum*, and all of the lengthy, lovely, lively duet.

If we had a GI who could sing like Lily Pons, we'd do the whole opera! But this is practically an all-male outpost and the Army admits no possibility of a Miss Pons in its roster.

The San Francisco Opera Guild Family

The summer brought many important changes in the lives of active members of the San Francisco Opera Guild. A son was born to Mrs. Roger D. Lapham, Jr., Chairman of the Opera Guild, who also inherits fame as a grandson of San Francisco's Mayor, the Honorable Roger D. Lapham. The new-born was named Jerd Abbot for Jerd Sullivan, Treasurer of the San Francisco Opera Guild. A son was also born to Mrs. Frederick Whitman, Secretary of the Guild, who named him Michael Robert, Robert for Lord Vansittart, England's former permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Also, in August, Miss Florence Bentley, Publicity Chairman of the Guild, was married to Thomas R. Hughes of Baltimore.

Guild privileges will this year include a reception honoring the opera artists on October 9, held in cooperation with the San Francisco Museum of Art. The Dress Rehearsal for Guild members will be *Falstaff*, on the evening of October 12. The main purpose of the Guild in war time is to purchase tickets for men and women in the armed forces. In this manner the Guild also helps to defray the expenses of the Opera season. With double usefulness in view, a plea is being made to every ticket subscriber of the 1944 Opera season to become a member of the Guild, and it is hoped that with a generous response, the Guild will be able to purchase even more tickets than last year. Already three boxes for the Regular Series of Opera and one box for the Popular Series have been purchased.

Meanwhile our advance seat sale surpasses all other years. It looks like a banner year for opera from coast to coast.

Mrs. Frederick Whitman, Sec'y and Mrs. J. Phillip Coghlan, Jr., Vice-Chairman of the San Francisco Opera Guild

THREE METROPOLITAN CARMENS

Mona Paulee, Regina Resnik and Lucielle Browning will exchange honors as the wilful gypsy of Seville in a unique production of *Carmen*, which opens in New London, Connecticut on October 2, for a five weeks Fall tour. Bizet's opera will be offered in its original opera comique form, with spoken dialogues, under the baton of Herman Adler, and two other members of the Metropolitan Company, Maxine Stellman and Donald Dickson, will be included in the cast. After a week in New England, the company will play Pennsylvania and New York, Michigan and Ohio.

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Jussi Bjoerling, the lyric Swedish tenor, who sang briefly but with great popular success at the Metropolitan in 1938 and 1939, was recently honored by the title Court Singer to the King of Sweden.

VITAL STATISTICS

DIED . . . . . **Dame Ethel Smyth,** composer of *Der Wald,* the only opera by a woman ever to have been presented at the Metropolitan, in Woking, Surrey, on May 9, 1944 at the age of 86. Noted as a militant leader in the cause of woman suffrage, as well as an author, composer and golfer, Miss Smyth was made Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1922.

DIED . . . . . **Riccardo Zandonai,** composer of *Francesca de Rimini,* presented at the Metropolitan in December, 1916, at Pesaro, Italy. The sixty-year old musician was a pupil of Pietro Mascagni, who survives him.

MARRIED . . **Kurt Baum,** Metropolitan tenor, on June 6, 1944, in Atlantic City, to the handsome Renate Schall, daughter of the late head of the Schall Granite Works in Breslau, Germany.

MARRIED . . **Frances Greer,** Metropolitan soprano and winner of the 1942 Auditions of the Air to Victor Trucco, assistant conductor and prompter on the Metropolitan Musical Staff, in Carson City, Nevada on June 22, 1944. (For a prophetic photograph of the happy pair, see Opera News, March 6, 1944, page 11.)

BORN . . . . . to **Risë Stevens** and Walter Szurovy, a son, Nicolas, on June 30 in Hollywood. "He's wonderful, beautiful," writes the proud mother, though she adds that "my happiness in Nicky was overshadowed to a large extent by the tragic death of my brother Bud who was killed in action in Normandy, two days after the invasion."

DIED . . . . . **Mikhail Mordkin,** the renowned Russian dancer, on July 15, 1944 at his home in Millbrook, N. J. at the age of 63. Mordkin made his American debut as co-star with Anna Pavlowa at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1910 and thereafter took a leading role in the history of Russian ballet in the United States. For nearly twenty years he passed on the traditions of his art in the school which he founded and which bore his name.

DIED . . . . . **Angelo Canarutto,** assistant conductor at the Metropolitan for two seasons. On August 29, 1944, the thirty-four year old musician was driving to Oswego Lake in California, for a brief vacation before his San Francisco Opera season, and was stricken at a roadside cafe.

MARRIED . . **Irra Petina,** Metropolitan mezzo soprano and star of the current operatta hit, *The Song of Norway* on September 3, to Lieutenant Frank R. Bussey, a surgeon in the U. S. Aviation Marine Corps. The bride is the daughter of a general in the personal guard of the late Czar Nicholas of Russia, the groom a graduate of the University of Texas, awaiting overseas assignment.

AMERICAN OPERA FOR THE METROPOLITAN

Over a hundred letters have reached the Metropolitan Opera House asking for further particulars on the contest for a new short opera by an American composer announced last May.

In view of such widespread interest, OPERA NEWS is glad to publish the exact specifications, conditions and terms of award.

The contest is sponsored by the Metropolitan in collaboration with the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University. Representatives of the Association and the Advisory Committee of the Fund will be chosen to form a Special Jury, which will award $1,000 to the composer of the opera which shows the greatest merit and (provided the composer is not his own librettist) $500 to the librettist, if a living citizen of the United States, native or naturalized.

It is the intention of the Metropolitan Opera Association that the winning work will be performed at the Metropolitan during the season of 1945-46.

The composer must be a citizen, native or naturalized, of the United States.

The subject matter of the opera and its treatment must be appropriate to the dimensions of the Metropolitan Opera House and the work must not exceed 75 minutes in performing length. The opera should not require more than one stage set, but may be divided into successive parts.

The libretto must be in English. The work must be new and original: works which have already been publicly performed and manuscripts which have been previously submitted to the Metropolitan Opera Association for consideration will not be eligible for this award.

The orchestration must not exceed the standard instrumentation of the modern operatic repertory. Full orchestral score and vocal-piano score must be submitted together.

Each work must be submitted anonymously, the score being marked with a designation or motto and accompanied by a sealed envelope, similarly marked, containing the names and addresses of the composer and librettist.

Manuscripts must be delivered to Eric T. Clarke, Administrative Secretary, Metropolitan Opera Association, Inc., Metropolitan Opera House, New York 18, N. Y., not later than September 1, 1945.

Selection will be made as soon as possible after this date, but the jury will reserve the right to make the cash award without recommending production at the Metropolitan.

The work chosen for the award will remain the property of the composer and librettist, both of whom will receive royalties for each performance. The composer will not be required to pay for the cost of preparing the orchestral parts and other material essential to the performance.

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MELLIFLUOUS MOVIES

Lauritz Melchior and James Melton will both be featured in motion pictures released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in the near future, it has recently been announced. The heroic Danish tenor will take a comedy part in *The Thrill of a Romance* for probable release in December; Mr. Melton's assignment is the hero of *Cimarron*, a screen version of Edna Ferber's romance of pioneer days in Oklahoma.

Leonard Warren, Metropolitan Opera baritone, deserted his usual Wagnerian-Russo-Italian repertory to sing Irish ballads in the Twentieth Century Fox production of "When Irish Eyes are Smiling" this summer. The picture will be released this Fall.

METROPOLITAN OPERA ASSOCIATION, Incorporated

NEW SUBSCRIPTION PRICES FOR SEASON 1944-1945

SEASON PRICES (Tax Extra) For 18 Consecutive Monday Evenings or Saturday Matinees

Orch. and Orch. Circle	$99.00
Other Orch. Circle	72.00
Grand Tier	81.00
Dress Circle	60.00
Balcony, rows A to F	45.00
Balcony, other rows	36.00
Family Circle, rows A to L	27.00
Family Circle, rows M to R	18.00

SEASON PRICES (Tax Extra) For 16 Wed. Thurs. & Fri. Evenings

Note: *The Wednesday Thursday and Friday evening subscription series will again comprise sixteen performances; the sixteen performances advantageously spaced over a 18 week period.*

Orch. and Orch. Circle	$88.00
Other Orch. Circle	64.00
Grand Tier	72.00
Dress Circle	52.00
Balcony, rows A to F	40.00
Balcony, other rows	32.00
Family Circle, rows A to L	24.00
Family Circle, rows M to R	16.00

SEASON PRICES (Tax Extra) For 16 POPULAR SATURDAY EVENINGS

Orchestra Seats	$60.00
Orchestra Circle, row A	60.00
Orch. Circle, rows B and C	52.00
Grand Tier	48.00
Dress Circle	44.00
Balcony, 1st, 2nd & 3rd rows	36.00
Balcony, other rows	32.00
Family Circle, rows A, B & C	24.00
Family Circle, other rows	16.00

Note: *Tickets for single performances will be in advance of the above prices*

THE SEASON OPENS MONDAY EVE., NOVEMBER 27

There will be *No Subscription Performance* on the following evenings:

Wed. Eve's. Feb. 7; March 28
Thurs. Eve's. Jan. 18; March 22
Fri. Eve's. Feb. 2; March 16

Sustaining, Contributing and Donor Members of The Metropolitan Opera Guild desiring subscriptions to the Opera Season are advised to apply to the Ticket Service Department before October 15, because of the demand, which far exceeds that of last year.

Wellesley, Mass.

Dear OPERA NEWS:

I take this opportunity to say to you what I have intended to express for a long time.

When OPERA NEWS *was first published I was a high school student living in New Jersey. My parents, who have had Saturday matinee seats for forty years, arranged to have me hear the opera each week.* OPERA NEWS *has always been something I wait for eagerly. When I knew that last year I would be leaving those magnificent performances, I made my father promise to send me the* OPERA NEWS. *Every Saturday afternoon, here at college, my room was filled with girls. For a half hour before the broadcast I read them the information from* OPERA NEWS, *and discussed with them the plot, characters and themes of the opera they were about to hear. I let them read my Victor book, Ernest Newman, and The Metropolitan Opera Guide. We also found the Operagrams helpful. Such an afternoon gave us both entertainment and culture, and I may assure you that mine was not the only room where this little scene is enacted.*

It is true, I am fortunate in having heard so many of the great operas, but at first I did not see how I could bear to leave Flagstad, Melchior and Wagner in particular, just to come to Wellesley. I am not yet completely reconciled, but the Saturday afternoon broadcasts have compensated for a lot, and OPERA NEWS *is a redeeming standby.*

Thank you for OPERA NEWS *and thanks to the musicians, artists, technicians, administrators and other members of that big family for our glorious Metropolitan opera!*

Very sincerely yours,

M. L. F.

Violetta to Die Daily

An almost-all Metropolitan Opera cast starts touring this week with forty performances booked by Verdi's *Traviata.*

The Wagner Opera Company has engaged Norena Greco, Stella Roman and Nadine Conner to exchange the title role throughout the seven weeks, while Armand Tokatyan and Jacques Gérard will alternate in the role of Alfredo, Mack Harrell and Carlo Morelli occasionally shedding the mantle of Germont in favor of a new Polish baritone, Daniel Duno. Doris Doree and Lodovico Oliviero are other members of the company, which opens its tour on October 4 in Harrisburg, Pa.

Désiré Defrère will act as stage director, and the baton will be shared by Paul Breisach and Giuseppe Bamboschek. New scenery has been designed by Cirker Robbins.

In accordance with Mr. Wagner's usual custom the opera will be sung in Italian, for this experienced manager believes that the public likes to laugh in English but prefers to weep in a foreign language.

After an arduous tour through the Middle West, the Company will conclude on November 12, in ample time for some of the principals to return to their Metropolitan assignments.

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OPERATIC HONORS

Lauritz Melchior, recently received two honors of a widely different nature on two continents. The Choir of La Plata University in Buenos Aires elected the tenor to honorary life membership "by unanimous vote and applause and many gritos".

Within a few days, Melchior was given the title "Honorary Test Pilot" by the Douglas Aircraft Plant in Oklahoma City for three appearances at the plant, during which he sang to thousands of workers. Mrs. Melchoir, who christened the C-47 "Sabbath Warrior," received the title "Honorary Riveter."

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Fausto Cleva, who graduated from Chorus Master at the Metropolitan to the position of Artistic Director of the Chicago Opera, was recently awarded the degree of Doctor of Music by the College of Music in Cincinnati, Ohio.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933, OF OPERA NEWS, PUBLISHED WEEKLY FROM NOVEMBER TO MID-APRIL (EXCEPTING 2ND WEEK OF NOVEMBER) AND MONTHLY IN OCTOBER AT NEW YORK, N. Y., FOR OCTOBER 2, 1944.

State of New York,
County of New York, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Evelyn Ploger, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the Business Manager of the Opera News, and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the dates shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher: The Metropolitan Opera Guild, Inc., 654 Madison Avenue, New York City 21; Editor, Mrs. John De Witt Peltz, 654 Madison Avenue, New York City 21; Managing Editor, Mrs. John De Witt Peltz, 654 Madison Avenue, New York City 21;Business Manager, Evelyn Ploger, 654 Madison Avenue, New York City 21.

2. That the owners are the Metropolitan Opera Guild, Inc.—which is a membership corporation without stockholders, 654 Madison Avenue, New York City 21, Miss Lucrezia Bori, chairman; Mrs. William Francis Gibbs, vice-chairman; Mrs. August Belmont, president; Mrs. Walter Sands Marvin, Mrs. Georges J. His, Mrs. Chauncey Waddell, vice-presidents; Donald P. Blagden, secretary; Col. John R. Simpson, treasurer.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders, owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are none.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the nue, New York City 21; Business Manager, Evelyn Ploger, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholders or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by her.

EVELYN PLOGER

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 19th day of September, 1944.

ROTHA A. ROSS,
Notary Public.

Notary Public, New York County.
My Commission expires March 30, 1946.

Repertory of the Twenty-second Annual Season

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA COMPANY

GAETANO MEROLA, *General Director*

War Memorial Opera House

Tues., October 3, 8:15 p.m. *MARTHA.* Mmes. Albanese, Glaz. Messrs. Alvary, Landi, Baccaloni, Goodwin.

Thurs., October 5, 8:30 p.m. *LA BOHEME.* Mmes. Albanese, MacWatters. Messrs. Kullman, Valentino, Cehanovsky, Pinza, Baccaloni. Mr. Merola conducting.*

Fri., October 6, 8:30 p.m. *LAKME.* Mmes. Pons, Glaz, Votipka, MacWatters, Avakian. Messrs. Jobin, Cehanovsky, Silva, Garris. Mr. Cimara conducting.

Sun., October 8, 2:30 p.m. *MARTHA.* Same cast as October 3rd performance.*

Tues., October 10, 8 p.m. *MANON.* Miss Albanese. Messrs. Kullman, Valentino, Alvary, DePaolis, Cehanovsky.

Wed., October 11, 8:15 p.m. *LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR.* Mmes. Pons, Votipka. Messrs. Petroff, Peerce, Garris, Alvary, Tissier. Mr. Cimara conducting.*

Fri., October 13, 8:30 p.m. *SECRET OF SUZANNE.* Cast to be announced. Kurt Adler conducting. *SALOME.* Mmes. Djanel, Harshaw, Glaz, Heitman. Messrs. Jagel, Garris, Alvary, Tallone, Wellman. Goodwin. Berton, DePaolis, Tissier, Cehanovsky. Mr. Sebastian conducting.*

Sun., October 15, 2:15 p.m. *AIDA.* Mmes. Roman, Harshaw, Votipka. Messrs. Jagel, Warren, Pinza, Alvary, DePaolis. Mr. Merola conducting.

Mon., October 16, 8 p.m. *FALSTAFF.* Mmes. Della Chiesa, Albanese, Harshaw, Glaz. Messrs. Baccaloni, Landi, Petroff, Garris, DePaolis, Alvary. Mr. Steinberg conducting.

Tues., October 17, 8:15 p.m. *RIGOLETTO.* Mmes. Pons, Glaz, Markham, Votipka, Lawlor. Messrs. Warren, Peerce, Silva, Wellman, DePaolis, Cehanovsky.*

Wed., October 18, 8 p.m. *FAUST.* Mmes. Della Chiesa, Glaz, Votipka. Messrs. Jobin, Pinza, Warren, Cehanovsky. Mr. Steinberg conducting.*

Thurs., October 19, 8:30 p.m. *SECRET OF SUZANNE.* Cast to be announced. *SALOME.* Same cast as October 13th performance.

Fri., October 20, 8 p.m. *UN BALLO IN MASCHERA.* Mmes. Roman, Harshaw, MacWatters. Messrs. Peerce, Warren, Alvary, Silva, Cehanovsky, Wellman. Mr. Steinberg, conducting.*

Sun., October 22, 2:30 p.m. *MANON.* Same cast as October 10th performance.*

Tues., October 24, 8:15 p.m. *LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN.* Mmes Glaz, MacWatters, Djanel, Albanese. Messrs. Jobin, Pinza, Valentino, Cehanovsky, DePaolis, Alvary, Tissier, Garris, Goodwin, Wellman, Sanders. Mr. Merola conducting.

Thurs., October 26, 8 p.m. *FALSTAFF.* Same cast as October 16th performance.*

Fri., October 27, 8 p.m. *CARMEN.* Mmes. Stevens, MacWatters, Votipka, Avakian. Messrs. Kullman, Valentino, Alvary, DePaolis, Cehanovsky. Mr. Sebastian conducting.*

Sat., October 28, 8:15 p.m. *LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN.* Same cast as October 24th performance.*

Repertory of the Thirty-third Season

CHICAGO OPERA COMPANY

FAUSTO CLEVA, *General Artistic Director*

Civic Opera House

Mon., October 16. *CARMEN.* Mmes. Swarthout, Carroll. Messrs. Baum, Sved.

Wed., October 18. *TRAVIATA.* Miss Sayao. Messrs. Berini, Weede.

Fri., October 20. *LA BOHEME.* Mmes. Hess, Carroll. Messrs. Martini, Bonelli, Engelman, Lazzari.

Sat., Aft., October 21. *AIDA.* Mmes. Milanov, Thorborg. Messrs. Baum, Sved, Moscona.

Sat., Eve., October 21. *DIE WALKURE.* Mmes. Traubel, Thorborg, Varnay. Messrs. Darcy, Janssen.

Mon., October 23. *TRAVIATA.*

Wed., October 25. *CARMEN.*

Fri., October 27. *IL TROVATORE.*

Sat. Aft., October 28. *OTELLO.*

Sat. Eve., October 28. *LA BOHEME.*

Mon., October 30. *DIE WALKURE.*

Wed., November 1. *AIDA.*

Fri., November 3. *CARMEN.*

Sat. Aft., November 4. *ROMEO ET JULIETTE.*

Sat. Eve., November 4. *TROVATORE.*

MILWAUKEE

Tues., November 7. *LA TRAVIATA.*

Thurs., November 9. *ROMEO ET JULIETTE.*

Tues., November 14. *FAUST.*

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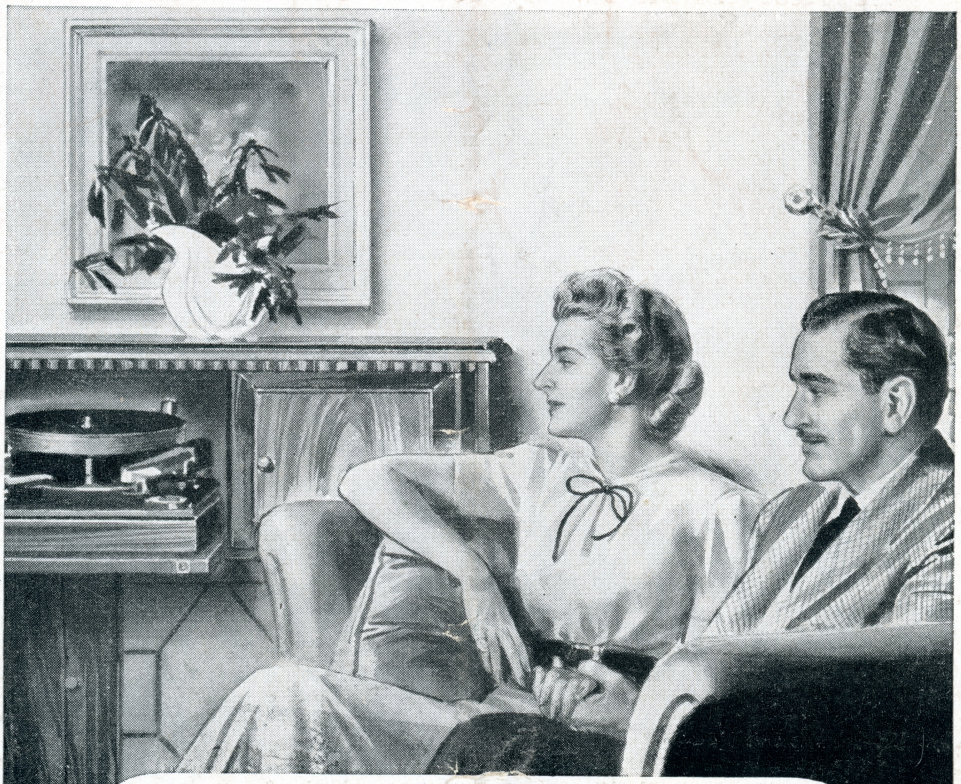

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